

# The Chiltern School

## Frequently Asked Questions - Yogi

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### What are the benefits of a school dog?

**Cognitive development** – building a companionship with a dog helps children stimulate their memory, problem-solving and game-playing skills. Having a school dog is known to increase enthusiasm for, and enjoyment of animals, which motivates children to think and learn

**Social skills** – dogs provide a mutual topic for conversation with others, and encourage responsibility, wellbeing and focussed interaction with others.

**Emotional skills** – dogs improve self-esteem, acceptance from others and are known for improving moods. Dogs can also help children develop compassion and respect for other living things and can reduce children's anxiety. Building respect can improve children's relationships with each other, parents and teachers and shows them how to nurture and care for another living thing. If any children are suffering from bereavement or are particularly sad, dogs can provide children with comfort and friendship.

**Physical development** – interaction with dogs is known to reduce blood pressure, provide tactile stimulation, assist with pain management and give motivation for children to move and walk.

**Reading** – school dogs are known to help children with their reading and literacy skills, through their calming presence and ability to listen to children read without being judgemental or critical. Children can build their confidence to read aloud to others through having a school dog.

**School community** – having a school dog builds the sense of a family environment and togetherness.

#### My child is allergic to dogs and I don't want them to have an allergic reaction.

We have chosen a recognised breed, Yogi is a Labradoodle, which has a non-allergenic coat and does not malt, meaning there is a significantly reduced risk of an allergic reaction. However, if you would still prefer your child not to come into direct contact with Yogi then please inform your child's class teacher. We will accommodate your request and ensure that arrangements are in place.

Labradoodles:

- The breed does not malt – their coat is non-allergenic, meaning there is a reduced risk of allergic reactions.
- The breed is known to be child-friendly, lively, gentle mannered and affectionate, yet sensitive.
- The breed is known to be highly intelligent and respond excellently to training.

# The Chiltern School

## Frequently Asked Questions - Yogi

### How is hygiene managed?

We have undertaken a thorough risk assessment, which details the hygiene practices that are in place, such as pupils washing their hands after any contact and the environment being monitored before and after visits.

### Will the dog be properly cared for?

Yogi is subject to a rigorous grooming process to prevent the risk of infection or disease. Yogi attends the dog groomers every 6-8 weeks and has regular flea and worm treatments. You can find more information on these arrangements in our risk assessment. Yopgi's welfare is as important to us as your child and we monitor his behaviour for any signs of distress. During holidays and weekends he has time to relax and do all the things dogs like to do, he is particularly fond of the beach!

### My child is scared of dogs.

We understand that some children may be fearful of dogs. Labradoodles are known for being extremely child-friendly and Yogi will provide the opportunity for children to overcome their fears, with their peers.

### Is the dog well-behaved?

Yogi has been in school since he was a 16 week old puppy, he is well-behaved at all times. He underwent a thorough socialising programme to ensure he reacted appropriately to the stimulus in school. Yogi will be kept on a short leash whenever walking around school and when with pupils and staff.

### How long will the sessions be?

Each class that has been selected will have one session per week that is between 20-40 mins in duration. The majority of the children already know Yogi and he knows them.